



John J. Neu
Chief of Police

BULLETIN

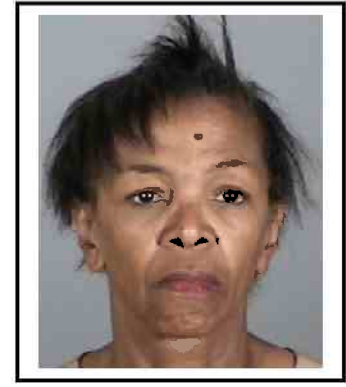
TORRANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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ARREST OF INTEREST **PIGEON DROP SCAM**

January 21, 2011



DETAILS: On Wednesday, January 19, 2011 at 1:10 pm, units were detailed to the commercial parking lot at 2545 PCH regarding two female suspects approaching people in the parking lot, saying they had found a purse containing money. During their investigation, officers located a black zip-up wallet containing several hundred fake bills and several photocopied hundred dollar bills, a dark blue bank bag containing a large stack of fake currency, several photocopied hundred dollar bills bound together by a rubber band, rolled up newspaper roughly the same length and width as the stack of bills and three yellow envelopes, one with several napkins inside of it; suspects were also in possession of several latex gloves. In script on the back of the fake bills was, "Fake Money" (a tactic used to avoid counterfeit charges).

One of the suspects stated she had previously been convicted for pigeon drop-type crimes. When asked to elaborate, she stated the scammer approaches the target/victim, flashes the money in the purse, claiming to have found \$150,000 in cash, and offers to split the money. If the victim falls for the scam, the scammer asks him or her to withdraw a large amount of cash from his or her bank account to prove the person has enough money and won't spend the "found money" while it is hidden away for a couple of years. At this point, the scammer will do some type of "bait and switch" with the bank bags or envelopes. If the "bait and switch" is not possible, the scammer will forcibly take the money and flee.

**IF YOU HAVE BEEN THE VICTIM OF THIS TYPE OF CRIME, OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS, PLEASE CALL THE TORRANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY AT
310-618-5641**

ANY INFORMATION FOR DETECTIVE CHARLEY – 310.618.5596